DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 434 084 SP 038 768

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TITLE Powerful Teacher Education: A Shared Decision Making Approach To Impact Public Policy.
PUB DATE 1999-08-00
NOTE 17p.; Paper presented at the Summer Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (San Antonio, TX, August 1999).
PUB TYPE Numerical/Quantitative Data (110) -- Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Alternative Teacher Certification; Beginning Teacher Induction; *Educational Change; Educational Legislation; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Mentors; National Standards; *Participative Decision Making; *Preservice Teacher Education; *Public Policy; State Legislation; State Standards
IDENTIFIERS Illinois

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses recent Illinois legislation related to education reform and some collaborative approaches being used to impact public policy. It shares implementation updates regarding the rules and regulations attached to the legislation and how these changes could impact educational excellence. equity, and accountability in the 21st century. The Illinois Association of Teacher Educators Legislative Ad Hoc Committee reviewed a 1996 IATE position paper for all items that were still important, developed a survey instrument to collect membership input regarding current issues, and shared survey findings. This paper states survey results in percentage of agreement of the 40 individuals who completed the survey. Nearly all agreed that IATE should encourage the continuous review of all regulations and laws pertaining to Illinois teacher education. Just under half felt that new standards for Illinois teacher education programs were not flexible enough. Most felt that the new standards for Illinois teacher education programs should be aligned with national standards. Three quarters believed the Illinois State Board of Education should require an induction program during the 4-year initial certification period. Most believed mentor teachers should receive professional development credit for mentoring student teachers. Most also believed that, in alternative teacher certification, students must complete a practice teaching experience that addresses four important issues. An appendix presents raw survey results with abbreviated questions. (SM)

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ED 434 084

POWERFUL TEACHER EDUCATION: A SHARED DECISION MAKING APPROACH TO IMPACT PUBLIC POLICY

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Paper Presented at the
Association of Teacher Educators' Convention
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August, 1999

SP038768

Powerful Teacher Education: A Shared Decision Making Approach to Impact Public Policy

Illinois has recently passed landmark legislation regarding the quality of teaching in the state. The new legislation will require all 56 teacher education institutions to be aligned with NCATE requirements, move from credit based programs to standards based programs, replace a 1 tier system for certification with a 3 tier system, require teachers to be recertified every 5 years with a standard certificate and 7 years for a master certificate, institute a 4 year probationary period for new teachers including an induction program, and regulate alternative routes to certification, just to name a few.

Many of these changes were initiated by *powerful teacher education* in collaborative efforts through the establishment and activation of coalitions among various professional associations, survey of members of the Illinois Association of Teacher Educators (IATE), and active involvement with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). As part of a collaborative relationship with ISBE, ISBE established advisory groups, a policy group and sent individuals to various meetings throughout the state in an effort to receive input from interested individuals. The advisory groups and the policy group included teachers, administrators, higher education individuals, business representatives, parents and others.

Now that legislation has passed into law, ISBE will finalize

Phase II of the implementation of the rules and regulations that will provide all the necessary details. It is at this juncture that our input as teacher educators is needed most.

As an officer of the Illinois Association of Teacher Educators, I have worked closely with ISBE and coalitions in this collaborative effort thus far. Now that we are in the implementation stages of the rules and regulations, it is absolutely necessary that we continue these collaborative efforts.

The goals of this presentation are to: (1) enter into dialogue regarding the landmark legislation that was recently passed in Illinois related to education reform and the collaborative approaches that are being used to impact public policy. (2) Share implementation updates regarding the rules and regulations attached to the legislation and how these changes could impact educational excellence, equity, and accountability in the 21st century.

Survey Findings

The IATE Legislative Ad Hoc committee was given the charge to review the 1996 IATE position paper for items that are still important issues, develop a survey instrument to receive membership input regarding current issues and to share survey findings.

At this point I wish to share some general findings and

provide more details in an additional paper at a later time. Results are stated in percentage of agreement of the 40 individuals that completed the survey. There is no guarantee that only IATE members completed the survey. Respondents were asked a total of 18 questions (See Appendix A). Results are shared in percentage of agreement.

Over 92% agreed that IATE should encourage, "...the continuous review of all regulations and laws pertaining to teacher education in Illinois..." When asked if, "The new standards for teacher education programs in Illinois are flexible enough." just under 41% agreed. And when asked to respond to "The new standards for teacher education programs in Illinois should be aligned with national standards." 84.2% agreed. When asked to respond to an additional issue regarding standards, "The standards movement needlessly limits teacher education institutions' programmatic freedom. " approximately 42% agreed.

The next few items inquired regarding a possible new teacher induction program. "The ISBE should require an induction program during the four-year initial certification period." over 78% agreed. An additional item regarding this issue, "If ISBE requires an induction program, the induction program should respond to the needs of the local school and district (e.g., as stated in school improvement plans)." revealed 83% are in agreement. Further, when asked, "If ISBE requires an induction program, institutions of higher education should play a formal

role in the induction program that occurs during the initial four-year certification." 84.2% were in agreement.

An inquiry regarding professional development, "Teachers should receive professional development credit for serving as mentors for student teaching or (if approved) for the new induction program." showed that 82% of the respondents were in agreement. Over 74% agreed that, "Performance portfolios should be used as a major part of the assessment at the end of the four-year initial certificate." When asked if, "ISBE should endorse the certificate awarded by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards and provide support for the Illinois teachers who wish to pursue this certification." 77% agreed. Over 83% agreed that, "Teacher education programs should be required to prepare their students for teaching elementary and secondary students in ways that are aligned with the K-12 Illinois Learning Standards."

Regarding alternative routes to certification, over 89% were in agreement with the following: "...before entering the classroom with a "Provisional Alternative Certificate", the individual must first complete a practice teaching experience that includes: (1) the ACTIVE SUPERVISION by both a teacher legally certified and qualified to teach in the subject area and able to conduct FULL TIME supervisory activities and a qualified representative from an institution of higher education; (2) a demonstration of successful teaching performance over a

CONTINUOUS FULL-DAY TEACHING experience which lasts for an extended period of weeks; (3) supervisory observations that are frequent, comprehensive, recorded, discussed in conferences and evaluated; (4) an experience completed at the grade level(s) and in the area of specialization appropriate to the certificate sought."

Regarding funding, approximately 88% agreed that, "IATE should be concerned with the allocation of funds for teacher education programs in Illinois." Finally, and perhaps of greatest importance, over 89% agreed that, "IATE should commit more resources to influencing state legislative decisions regarding teacher education programs."

Summary

As specified above, these statements are to serve as findings and not conclusions. There is a need to continue data analysis and provide further publication. This should, however, provide sufficient information of how IATE is attempting to implement a Shared Decision Making approach regarding educational reform in Illinois.

Appendix A

Raw Survey Results with Abbreviated Questions

SURVEY RESULTS

Full Survey Instrument is Added as an Attachment

Q1. ...IATE believes in "continous review of all regulations and laws...."

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	30	75.0	75.0	75.0
	Agree	7	17.5	17.5	92.5
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	5.0	5.0	97.5
	Disagree	1	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Q2. The new standards for teacher education programs in Illinois are flexible enough.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	4	10.0	10.8	10.8
	Agree	11	27.5	29.7	40.5
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	13	32.5	35.1	75.7
	Disagree	6	15.0	16.2	91.9
	Strongly Disagree	3	7.5	8.1	100.0
	Total	37	92.5	100.0	
Missing		3	7.5		
Total		40	100.0		

Q3. The new standards for teacher education programs in Illinois should be aligned with national standards.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	16	40.0	42.1	42.1
	Agree	16	40.0	42.1	84.2
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	5	12.5	13.2	97.4
	Disagree	1	2.5	2.6	100.0
	Total	38	95.0	100.0	
Missing		2	5.0		
Total		40	100.0		

Q4. The limits placed on teacher education institution's programmatic freedom by the standards movement are needed.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	4	10.0	11.1	11.1
	Agree	11	27.5	30.6	41.7
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	8	20.0	22.2	63.9
	Disagree	12	30.0	33.3	97.2
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.5	2.8	100.0
	Total	36	90.0	100.0	
Missing		4	10.0		
Total		40	100.0		

Q5. The ISBE should require an induction program during the four-year initial certification period.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	20	50.0	54.1	54.1
	Agree	9	22.5	24.3	78.4
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	10.0	10.8	89.2
	Disagree	2	5.0	5.4	94.6
	Strongly Disagree	2	5.0	5.4	100.0
	Total	37	92.5	100.0	
Missing		3	7.5		
Total		40	100.0		

Q6. If ISBE requires an induction program, the programs should respond to needs of the local school and district (e.g., as stated in school improvement plans).

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	13	32.5	35.1	35.1
	Agree	18	45.0	48.6	83.8
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	10.0	10.8	94.6
	Disagree	2	5.0	5.4	100.0
	Total	37	92.5	100.0	
Missing		3	7.5		
Total		40	100.0		

Q7. If ISBE requires an induction program, institutions of higher education should play a formal role during the initial four-year certification period.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	14	35.0	36.8	36.8
	Agree	18	45.0	47.4	84.2
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	5.0	5.3	89.5
	Disagree	3	7.5	7.9	97.4
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.5	2.6	100.0
	Total	38	95.0	100.0	
Missing		2	5.0		
Total		40	100.0		

Q8. Teachers should receive professional development credit for serving as mentors for student teachers or (if approved) for the new induction program.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	16	40.0	41.0	41.0
	Agree	16	40.0	41.0	82.1
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	10.0	10.3	92.3
	Strongly Disagree	3	7.5	7.7	100.0
	Total	39	97.5	100.0	
Missing		1	2.5		
Total		40	100.0		

Q9. Performance portfolios should be used as a major part of the assessment at the end of the four-year initial certificate period.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	11	27.5	28.2	28.2
	Agree	18	45.0	46.2	74.4
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	7	17.5	17.9	92.3
	Disagree	2	5.0	5.1	97.4
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.5	2.6	100.0
	Total	39	97.5	100.0	
Missing		1	2.5		
Total		40	100.0		

Q10. ISBE should endorse the certificate awarded by the National Board for Professional Standards (NBPTS) and provide support for the Ilinois teachers who wish to pursue this certification.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	15	37.5	41.7	41.7
	Agree	13	32.5	36.1	77.8
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	10.0	11.1	88.9
	Disagree	4	10.0	11.1	100.0
	Total	36	90.0	100.0	
Missing		4	10.0		
Total		40	100.0		

Q11. Teacher education programs should be required to prepare their students for teaching elementary and secondary students in ways that are aligned with the K-12 Illinois Learning Standards.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	12	30.0	32.4	32.4
	Agree	19	47.5	51.4	83.8
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	6	15.0	16.2	100.0
	Total	37	92.5	100.0	
Missing		3	7.5		
Total		40	100.0		

Q12--1. Regarding the new requirements for alternative certification, the individual should first complete a practice teaching experience before entering the classroom with a "Provisional Alternative Certificate."

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	25	62.5	65.8	65.8
	Agree	10	25.0	26.3	92.1
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	5.0	5.3	97.4
	Disagree	1	2.5	2.6	100.0
	Total	38	95.0	100.0	
Missing		2	5.0		
Total		40	100.0		

Q12--4. The practice teaching experience should include supervisory observations that are frequent, comprehensive, recorded, discussed in conferences, and evaluated.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	29	72.5	74.4	74.4
	Agree	8	20.0	20.5	94.9
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	2.5	2.6	97.4
	Disagree	1	2.5	2.6	100.0
	Total	39	97.5	100.0	
Missing		1	2.5		
Total		40	100.0		

Q12--5. The practice teaching experience should be completed at the grade level(s) and in the area of specialization appropriate to the certification being sought.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	30	75.0	76.9	76.9
	Agree	9	22.5	23.1	100.0
	Total	39	97.5	100.0	
Missing		1	2.5		
Total		40	100.0		

Q13. IATE should be concerned with the allocation of funds for teacher education programs in Illinois.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	22	55.0	61.1	61.1
	Agree	10	25.0	27.8	88.9
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	5.0	5.6	94.4
	Disagree	2	5.0	5.6	100.0
	Total	36	90.0	100.0	
Missing		4	10.0		
Total		40	100.0		

Q14. IATE should commit more resources to influencing state legislative decisions regarding teacher education programs.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	19	47.5	52.8	52.8
	Agree	13	32.5	36.1	88.9
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	5.0	5.6	94.4
	Disagree	1	2.5	2.8	97.2
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.5	2.8	100.0
	Total	36	90.0	100.0	
Missing		4	10.0		
Total		40	100.0		

Summary

As specified above, these statements are to serve as findings and not conclusions. There is a need to continue data analysis and provide further publications. This should, however, provide sufficient information of how IATE is attempting to implement a Shared Decision Making approach regarding educational reform in Illinois.